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THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 74/NO. 27 JULY 19, 2010

INSIDE

Chicago cop guilty of perjury in torture cases

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Obama scapegoats immigrant workers

BY SETH GALINSKY

In a July 1 speech on "comprehensive immigration reform," President Barack Obama opposed calls for a moratorium on deporting undocumented workers. Instead, he said "the 11 million who broke these laws should be held accountable."

While none of the measures Obama outlined in the speech at American University in Washington, D.C., are new, the anti-working-class character of his "reform" proposals came through clearly.

In spite of stepped-up enforcement of existing anti-immigrant laws and the passage of new ones like in Arizona, protests for immigrant rights have continued. Over the past several years hundreds of thousands of working people have taken to the street in demonstrations across the United States to demand an end to immigration raids and to call for granting papers to undocumented immigrants.

Paraphrasing the arguments of

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Socialist candidates begin Iowa campaign

BY CHUCK GUERRA

DES MOINES, Iowa—Socialist Workers Party candidates in Iowa launched their 2010 campaign here July 2.

"We're campaigning for measures to defend working people from the effects of the capitalist depression," Helen Meyers, SWP candidate for lieutenant governor, told Kanesha Fuller, 25, an unemployed worker. "Millions of workers need jobs and there is much that needs to be built—housing, hospitals, and better levees to keep the rivers from flooding working-class neighborhoods," she said.

Parts of Des Moines and other towns in Iowa were hard hit by flooding in 1993 and 2008. A levee that failed in 2008, causing the flooding of a working-class district in Des Moines, has been temporarily repaired but not replaced.

The socialist campaign puts forward immediate demands, including unemployment insurance for as long

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Jobless crisis deeply affects most workers

More than 1.7 million lose benefits

Scott Olson/Getty Images

Chicago job fair June 23. Jobless figures don't convey scope of employment crisis.

BY ANGEL LARISCY

"Of the 13 recessions that the American public has endured since the Great Depression of 1929–33, none has presented a more punishing combination of length, breadth and depth than this one," says a June 30 report from the Pew Research Center.

The survey, entitled "How the Great Recession Has Changed Life in America," says the current economic crisis has directly affected more than half of all working adults through layoffs, cuts in take-home pay, reduction in work hours, or being forced to take just part-time jobs.

Unemployment data doesn't "fully convey the scope of the employment crisis that has unfolded during the recession," the report states.

Some 40 percent of those interviewed said they tapped into savings or retirement accounts to make ends meet; more than six out of 10 cut their spending and borrowing. One in 10 adults, including 24 percent of workers from 18 to 29 years old, moved back in with their parents because of the economy. Thirty-five percent of

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New York: new divorce law, domestic workers get rights

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

The New York State legislature in early July passed a bill that grants rights to domestic workers, becoming the first state nationwide to do so. In another victory for working people legislators also approved a no-fault divorce law.

The Domestic Workers' Bill of Rights bill sets a workweek of 40 hours—44 in the case of live-in workers—with at least one day off each week. For overtime beyond the weekly limits, employers must pay time-and-a-half. Workers will get three paid days off yearly, after one year of employment.

In addition, domestic workers will be covered by laws against workplace sexual harassment. They will be entitled to temporary disability benefits and unemployment insurance.

"We take care of the sick. We take care of the elderly. We take care of their worldly goods," Patricia Fran-

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Contingent at demonstration organized by Domestic Workers United June 14, 2009, to demand labor rights for domestic workers in New York.

Trial of Oakland cop who shot Oscar Grant goes to L.A. jury

BY NORTON SANDLER

LOS ANGELES—The trial of former transit cop Johannes Mehserle for the killing of Oscar Grant, a 22-year old Black man, in Oakland, California, went to a jury here July 2.

The trial was transferred to Los Angeles after Mehserle's attorney won a change of venue, claiming that the defendant couldn't get a fair trial in the Bay Area because of extensive publicity about the case. There are no Blacks on the jury.

Multiple videos shot by witnesses to the killing show Mehserle shooting Grant in the back Jan. 1, 2009, as he lay on his stomach on the platform at an Oakland Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) stop. The shooting took place while another cop, Anthony Pirone, had his knee on the back of Grant's neck and was pushing his face into the platform floor.

The videos and photos taken by eyewitnesses have been widely disseminated on the Internet. The outrage over the killing in Oakland's Black community and throughout the Bay Area resulted in the Alameda County district attorney filing murder charges against Mehserle—a rarity in cases involving a killing by a cop. Judge Robert Perry ruled that Mehserle can't be found guilty of first-degree murder. However, he let stand a possible conviction on a sec-

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Protests in Iran oppose death penalty for Kurd

BY CINDY JAQUITH

Twenty-seven-year-old Zeynab Jalalian, a Kurdish woman, faces the death penalty on charges of collaborating with the Free Life Party in Kurdistan (PJAK), an armed group fighting for Kurdish self-governance within Iran.

The government presented no evidence of Jalalian's involvement in armed attacks at her trial in 2009. She had no lawyer present. But she was convicted of *moharebeh* (waging war), a charge under Iranian sharia law designated for armed actions against the state, but often used for broader antigovernment acts. The Iranian Supreme Court upheld Jalalian's sentence last year.

Jalalian's family last heard from her about a month ago, when she informed them by telephone that she was in Evin Prison in Tehran. Authorities have provided no information to the family since, and attorneys have been unable to see her.

In late June Zahra Rahnavard, a prominent professor and wife of bourgeois opposition leader Mir Hossein Mousavi, issued an appeal for Jalalian.

In a statement to the opposition Web site Jaras, Rahnavard asked, "What was her crime? Was it because last year she put pen to paper, created posters and carried them around with her? . . . Is it not better for everyone, particularly women and our youth, to be provided with new opportunities enabling them to once again take their legitimate place in society and the political spectrum?"

Seven Kurds have been among those executed in Iran in the last year, according to the *New York Times*. Another 15 are currently on death row. The widening use of the death penalty against political activists is viewed in Iran as an attempt to intimidate those who challenged last year's presidential election and call for freedom of speech and association, release of political prisoners, and more rights for women.

In May the government executed four Kurdish activists, sparking strikes in Iranian Kurdistan.

Zahra Rahnavard (above), prominent Iranian professor, issued appeal for Zeynab Jalalian, a Kurdish woman who faces death penalty.

Students protest cop attack in Puerto Rico

Ricardo Arduengo/Assocated Press

Puerto Rican police attacked and tear-gassed a student demonstration outside a session of the Puerto Rican legislature June 30 (above). The week before, after a more than two-month struggle, students forced the University of Puerto Rico administration to back down on plans to reduce the number of students receiving financial aid and to immediately raise fees. Now the administration says they will impose a $800 tuition hike next January. On July 2 hundreds protested the police attack. Another protest is planned for July 18.

—SETH GALINSKY

Swedish citizen fights to get off UN sanctions list

BY ANITA ÖSTLING

STOCKHOLM, Sweden—Yassin Mohamed, a Swedish citizen of Somali descent, is fighting to remove his name from the United Nations sanctions list. He was placed there at the request of the U.S. government.

A little over two years ago Mohamed was arrested and kept in detention for more than four months along with another Swedish-Somali man, Omar Mohamed. They were accused of transferring money to Somalia that the Swedish government claimed would be used for "terrorist" purposes. After a public campaign mobilizing hundreds of people the two men were released. No charges were ever brought against them and they were never put on trial.

Yassin Mohamed's lawyer, Tomas Olsson, explained how the sanctions list works at a meeting May 29 sponsored by the Swedish-Somali Human Rights Committee.

"Earlier sanctions were used against states," he explained, "but now they've been extended to individuals. If one member state demands that an individual be put on the list and no other state opposes this, it goes into effect within 48 hours. No reason or motive has to be given and it goes through no court proceedings. One state opposing the individual being taken off is enough to keep him there."

Ali Berzengi, an Iraqi living in Sweden, also spoke. After being convicted of financing terrorism he served his six-year sentence in full, but was kept in jail pending deportation for several months. The state found nowhere to deport him, so he was released, but has to report to the cops every day.

Gösta Hultén, from Charta 08, an organization fighting for everyone's right to due process, and Dag Tirsén, from the Communist League, also spoke.

Militant/Anita Östling

Yassin Mohamed, a Swedish citizen of Somali descent, is fighting to remove his name from the UN sanctions list.

THE MILITANT

U.S. troops out of Afghanistan!

The firing of U.S. general Stanley McChrystal highlights the challenges Washington faces in its war against the Afghan people. The 'Militant' calls for immediate withdrawal of all U.S. and allied troops from Afghanistan now. Don't miss an issue.

U.S. Army/Jon Rosa

U.S. and Afghan troops prepare for air assault in Afghanistan June 15.

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Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the Militant's views. These are expressed in editorials.

Socialist Workers begin campaigning in Iowa

Continued from front page

as a worker is unemployed and workers control of safety on the job to protect the lives and bodies of working people.

"I'm glad I'm not the only one who thinks this way," Fuller said, thanking the socialists for the campaign flyer. She had not been able to find a job since quitting work recently to have a baby. "Older women I know are afraid to quit jobs they don't like, because they know how hard it will be to find another," Fuller told the socialist candidate.

Meyers and two supporters were campaigning outside a Family Dollar store in a predominantly Black neighborhood here. The Socialist Workers candidate explained that any gains working people win under capitalism are temporary because the wealthy owners always seek ways to undo anything that restricts their ability to maximize profits.

That's why working people need to take political power out of the hands of the capitalist rulers, Meyers said. A workers and farmers government will expropriate the capitalists and use the state-owned factories, mines, and mills to advance the interests of workers and farmers.

As part of their election activities, the socialist campaigners are introducing working people and students to the *Militant* and the book *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* by Jack Barnes.

A slate of Socialist Workers Party candidates in Iowa will be stepping up their campaign in coming weeks. Rebecca Williamson, 28, an assembly worker, is the SWP candidate for U.S. Congress, District 3. She is running against incumbent Democrat Leonard Boswell and Republican Brad Zaun. Margaret Trowe, 62, SWP candidate for secretary of agriculture, joined Williamson and another supporter to talk with workers shopping at a supermarket in southeast Des Moines.

María Gómez, 54, a packinghouse worker, told Trowe she is worried about the impact of the economic crisis. She is only getting four hours of work a day. "I can't pay the bills like this," Gómez said.

When hours are cut, we should demand that workers still get 40 hours pay, the Socialist Workers campaigners explain.

The socialist candidates are also calling for the immediate, unconditional withdrawal of all U.S. troops from Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, and everywhere else they are stationed around the world.

While Meyers, Williamson, and Trowe campaigned in Des Moines, David Rosenfeld, 47, a tire plant worker and SWP candidate for governor, attended the convention of the National Organization for Women in Boston. Rosenfeld and the other SWP candidates are active in support of abortion rights.

Petitioning to put the SWP candidates on the ballot in Iowa begins July 10.

Militant/Margaret Trowe

Rebecca Williamson (right), Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Congress, campaigns by shopping center in Des Moines.

Help put SWP candidates on the ballot!

New York

July 9–18

Róger Calero for U.S. Congress, 15th C.D.

Washington D.C.

July 24–August 1

Omari Musa for Mayor

Iowa

July 10–18

David Rosenfeld for governor

Helen Meyers for lt. governor

Rebecca Williamson for U.S. Congress, 3rd C.D.

Contact campaign volunteers at addresses listed on page 8 for more information.

Socialists in New York open ballot drive

BY ANGEL LARISCY

NEW YORK—The Socialist Workers Party in New York kicked off its election campaign at a July 4 barbecue and picnic here attended by some 40 people.

Campaigners in New York will begin collecting 7,000 signatures on July 9 to place Róger Calero on the ballot for U.S. Congress in the 15th district in Manhattan. They are also fielding Daniel Fein for governor and Willie Cotton and Ruth Robinett for the two U.S. Senate seats that are open in New York.

Speaking at the July 4 event Calero pointed out workers in New York City are facing deep attacks. Two months after the closing of St. Vincent's Hospital in Manhattan, Harlem's North General Hospital was closed July 2, laying off 900 workers. The city's Metropolitan Transit Authority just eliminated 38 bus and 2 subway lines, and reduced service on 11 subway lines and 76 bus routes.

A new 2011 city budget cuts $1 billion through measures like slashing jobs, eliminating some senior centers and day-care programs, and decreasing funding for education and adult literacy.

Militant/Arthur Hughes

New York Socialist Workers congressional candidate Róger Calero addresses supporters at July 4 barbecue.

Calero told those gathered at the barbecue that New York was not alone in going after workers and explained how the California governor is using a legislative impasse on a new budget there to lower the pay of 200,000 state workers to minimum wage.

Pointing to the fact that nearly half of all those who are unemployed in the United States have been out of work for six months or more, Calero said the SWP campaign "demands a shorter workweek with no cut in pay to spread available work around and pay increases that keep pace with inflation."

"We need to use our unions, and organize unions where we don't have them, so workers can more effectively fight against the speedup and unsafe conditions bosses are increasingly imposing on the job," said Calero. "We need workers control of safety on the job so that we can exercise veto power in the workplace to stop unsafe practices." This is the only way to save lives in the mines, mills, and factories and prevent catastrophic accidents like the BP oil disaster in the Gulf, which took 11 workers' lives and is ruining the livelihoods of thousands of others, he said.

"We will make gains in the course of struggle, but they will always be under constant threat," Calero said. "That is why we need the working class in power, to begin organizing society from top to bottom in the interests of the great majority—working people."

Calero invited those present to help collect signatures to place the SWP on the ballot and join in the campaigning through the fall.

—*MILITANT LABOR FORUMS*—

CALIFORNIA

San Francisco

Meet and Hear Socialist Workers Candidates: Lea Sherman for Governor, Gerardo Sánchez for U.S. Congress, 8th C.D. Fri., July 16. Dinner, 6:30 p.m.; program, 7:30 p.m. *5482 Mission St. Tel.: (415) 584-2135.*

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Barack Obama, American Society, and Human Rights in the 21st Century

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Sat. July 17, 1:05 p.m.

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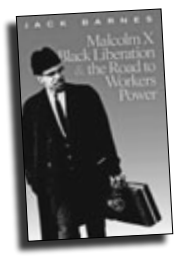

Read, Sell, & Discuss

Malcolm X, Black Liberation, & the Road to Workers Power

Des Moines, Iowa

I sold a *Militant* subscription for a prisoner at Sandstone prison in Minnesota via his friend, who I met at the recent U.S. Social Forum in Detroit. The friend was a young Black man who was selling music and DVDs. I showed him *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* and the *Militant*. He said his friend in prison would like the paper.

I told him about the *Militant* Prisoners' Fund. He paid $6 for a six-month subscription and told me to contact him after the Social Forum to get his friend's information, which he had at home in Wisconsin. Next step is to get the book circulating in there and other prisons. [Editor's note: Pathfinder offers a 50 percent discount on its books to workers behind bars. Mail prepaid orders to Pathfinder Press, P.O. Box 162767, Atlanta, GA 30321-2767.]

—Rebecca Williamson

Minneapolis

On the ramp at the Minneapolis–St. Paul airport we have sold 10 copies of *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*. A few others agreed to buy it after the next payday. Four of those who bought the book also got introductory subscriptions to the *Militant*. The book sells itself to those looking for a way to fight against the conditions we face. Also the photographs have been particularly attractive.

Workers from Somalia, Togo, Gambia, and Burma are among those who bought the book. A strategy that seems to work is to show the book to as many workers as possible who we think may have even the slightest interest in it, instead of making assumptions on who we think will buy the book. We will also be trying to get *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* into the airport's bookstores.

—David Lee and Marty Knaeble

Liverpool, England

Nine copies of *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power* were sold leading up to and during a May 27 meeting on the book at Liverpool University. Forty-four people, mostly students and staff, attended the meeting, which was hosted by the Trade Union and Community seminar series. Paul Davies from Pathfinder Books gave a presentation on the book, which was followed by lively discussion.

Michael Mohebbi, who had picked up a copy a few weeks earlier, said, "After reading 10 pages I saw myself through different eyes. After reading 100 pages I saw the world through different eyes." Half the books were sold with subscriptions to the *Militant*, with the remaining three sold along with *The Working Class and the Transformation of Learning.*

—Alex Xezonakis

Librarians attracted to Pathfinder titles

Militant/Glova Scott

WASHINGTON—Nearly 20,000 librarians from around the country attended the American Library Association conference here June 24–29, held at the Washington Convention Center. Hundreds stopped by Pathfinder Press's attractive booth. "I like Pathfinder books, because they help my students think for themselves," said one high school librarian from the Bay Area, commenting that many Pathfinder titles are speeches and writings by revolutionary and working-class leaders themselves, not books about them. He placed an order for four titles on the spot.

The economic crisis was reflected at the conference in several ways, including workshops on how to survive the budget cuts and a busy job referral booth in the exhibit area. It was common to see librarians sporting badges that said they were looking for work. More than 100 librarians signed up to be contacted by Pathfinder to discuss future orders. In addition, conference participants bought $217 in books, including four copies of *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*. A Farsi-language distributor decided to place five of Pathfinder's many titles in that language on his Web site.

—SUSAN LAMONT

Two more miners die in West Virginia and Kentucky

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Since the April 5 explosion at Massey Energy's Upper Big Branch Mine in Montcoal, West Virginia, which killed 29 miners, deaths in U.S. coal mines have continued to rise due to unsafe work conditions imposed by the bosses.

Two more miners were recently killed on the job—one in West Virginia and another in Kentucky. The death toll for the first half of this year is 40, nine of them since the Massey Energy blast. Thirty-two have been in West Virginia. The death toll for all of 2009 was 34.

On July 1 a Massey Energy miner was run over by an underground shuttle car at White Buck Coal Co.'s Pocahontas Mine in Greenbrier County, West Virginia. The 60 workers employed at this mine face dreadful safety conditions. Last year the mine's accident rate was nearly twice the national average. In the past 12 months Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) inspectors cited the company for more than 260 violations, including 77 classified as "significant and substantial."

Commenting on this recent fatality, U.S. labor secretary Hilda Solis urged the mine bosses to be more safety conscious. "We are committed to doing everything in our power to ensure that tragedies like this never happen again," she stated, "but ultimately the responsibility for miner safety rests with the mine companies."

On June 24 Bobby Smith, 29, an underground miner in eastern Kentucky, was crushed to death between the wall and a continuous mining machine. Smith had worked in the mines for 12 years. The accident occurred at James River Coal's Leeco 68 mine located near Hazard, Kentucky.

Eight days earlier a section foreman was killed on the job after being hit by a falling steel beam. The death occurred at Lone Mountain Processing's Clover Fork Mine No. 1 at Holmes Mill in southeastern Kentucky.

Retreat mining was taking place there, which involves cutting away pillars of coal that support overhead rock layers. According to MSHA and the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, more than 50 miners have been killed in retreat mining operations over the past 25 years. Of those, 20 have died since 2000.

"It's tremendously dangerous," Tim Miller, an international representative for the United Mine Workers of America told Associated Press. "You have to be able to run really fast."

Meanwhile, new facts about lax enforcement of safety regulations by MHSA inspectors have come to light. MSHA recently claimed that a "computer programming error" led it to not issue an enforcement warning letter to Massey's Upper Big Branch Mine prior to the April explosion.

Over the past 15 months MSHA dropped at least 10 coal mines from its "pattern of violation" (POV) list, reported the Department of Labor inspector general. Citing "resource limitations," MSHA Coal Administrator Kevin Stricklin in March 2009 "directed his staff to only consider POV warnings for one mine per field office and no more than three mines per district office," wrote *Charleston Gazette* reporter Ken Ward Jr.

Ontario: Striking Steelworkers to vote on new pact with Vale

BY JOHN STEELE

MONTREAL—A tentative five-year agreement between United Steelworkers (USW) Local 6500's bargaining committee and Vale negotiators was announced July 4 and will be submitted to a vote at union membership meetings July 7 and 8. Local 6500's leadership is recommending a yes vote.

The 3,000 nickel miners and smelter and refinery workers in Sudbury, Ontario, have been on strike against Vale's drive for major contract concessions since July 13 of last year. The company is seeking to cut pensions, eliminate the nickel bonus, and contract out work. It has been on a union-busting campaign to restart full production using scabs.

Negotiations between the union and Vale broke down June 30 over the fate of nine fired union activists. Hundreds of strikers turned up at the Steelworkers hall to find out what happened.

Union officials said that by June 22 the union bargaining committee and Vale had agreed on all issues except the fired workers.

USW Local 6500 demanded that the cases of the fired strikers be submitted to the Ontario Labour Relations Board (OLRB) for binding arbitration. Vale refused to agree to this, saying it had a right to fire workers who violate its code of conduct. According to the USW press release, the OLRB will discuss the issue beginning July 9.

"We have to protect our members," striker Mike Lacelle told the *Militant* before the tentative deal was reached. "We have to stand our ground."

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Nebraska town votes to adopt anti-worker law

BY MAGGIE TROWE

DES MOINES, Iowa—Voters in Fremont, Nebraska, approved an anti-immigrant measure June 21 by 57 percent to 43 percent.

This town of 25,000, located 35 miles west of Omaha, whose main industry is two large meatpacking plants, drew nationwide attention leading up to the vote.

The new law makes it a crime to harbor, hire, or rent to undocumented immigrants, and gives local police authorization to ask people for their immigration papers. The law does not apply to the two meatpacking plants, which are outside city limits and employ many of the 1,100 immigrants who live in Fremont.

"This is bad," Gustavo Monterroso, 23, told the *Militant*. Monterroso works at the Hormel plant south of Fremont. The plant's workforce includes many immigrant workers born in Mexico and Central America, as well as a number born in the United States. Of his U.S.-born coworkers, Monterroso said that "some were for us, some not." He said he has experienced verbal abuse in the town. "Some people tell us to go back to Mexico," he said. "We pay rent, we pay bills, but some people don't like us."

A Mexican-born factory worker who asked that her name not be used told the *Militant*, "They are discriminating against us. We come here to work and to make a better life, not to take anyone's job. Sometimes we can't make a living in our countries. People are worried about what the cops are going to do now." She said that where she works the U.S.-born and Mexican-born workers get along.

Supporters of the *Militant* visited Fremont three times in the six weeks prior to the vote, going door-to-door in trailer parks where most residents are immigrant workers, as well as talking to shoppers in the local Walmart parking lot. They found a variety of reactions to the measure.

A week before the election, one African American worker of Jamaican descent said she was undecided on how to vote. A high school student told us he was "totally against" what he called "that racial profiling measure." An older U.S.-born worker said, "I'm for legal immigrants, but if you're illegal, get out!" A U.S.-born woman said, "I hope people here will come to their senses and vote against this law." Some people turned away from us and said they didn't want to talk about the vote.

An effort to pass the measure in the city council failed 5-4 in 2008, with Mayor Donald Edwards casting the tie-breaking vote against the ordinance.

Following that defeat, supporters of the bill collected more than 3,000 signatures to put the question on the ballot in a special election. Charging that the law would be unconstitutional, the city council sued. In April the Nebraska Supreme Court ruled in favor of holding the vote.

Some of the measure's opponents focused on anticipated costs the city may incur as a result of lawsuits against the ordinance. The law is "going to have negative consequences for this community for many years to come, increased taxes, more government spending, and more conflict," Kristin Ostrom, who is active with "One Fremont–One Future," a group that campaigned for a "no" vote, told the press.

Reuters/Joshua Lott

More than 20,000 march to state capitol in Phoenix May 29 to protest Arizona's anti-immigrant law. New measure in Fremont, Nebraska, makes it a crime to harbor, hire, or rent to undocumented immigrants and gives police authorization to ask for papers.

Obama scapegoats immigrants

Continued from front page

some fighters for immigrant rights, Obama asked, "Why should we punish people who are just trying to earn a living?" The U.S. president called this a mistaken "sense of compassion" and a "moral" argument that should be rejected.

He claimed that legalizing undocumented workers without first making them "admit that they broke the law," register, pay fines, and learn English—before being allowed to even get in line for papers, much less be guaranteed papers—would make "a mockery of all those who are going though the process of immigrating legally."

Obama said that deporting 11 million people without papers is not in the interest of the capitalist class. "Such an effort would be logistically impossible and wildly expensive," he said.

Immigration is key for boosting the profits of big business and competing with capitalists in other countries. Obama noted that a younger immigrant workforce "is a powerful advantage in global competition."

The U.S. president called for making it easier for immigrants with skills needed to maintain the competitive edge of U.S. businesses or who have money to invest in capitalist enterprises to come to the United States. He called them the "best and the brightest."

In his speech, Obama criticized Arizona's latest anti-immigrant law because he is opposed to "a patchwork of local immigration rules—where we all know one clear national standard is needed." He did not say what standard he proposes.

Answering some right-wing critics who say that the White House has been too soft on immigrants, Obama boasted that "we have more boots on the ground near the southwest border than at any time in our history," referring to stepped up militarization and immigration patrols of the U.S.-Mexico border.

Obama blamed Republicans for not working with him and other Democrats to put together an immigration reform.

Is Socialist Revolution in the U.S. Possible?
by Mary-Alice Waters

Waters explains why a socialist revolution is not only possible but why revolutionary struggles by working people are *inevitable*, initiated not by the toilers, but forced upon us by the employing class's crisis-driven assaults on our living standards and job conditions—on our very humanity.

$7 *(also available in Spanish, French, and Farsi)*

Available online or from a distributor listed on page 8

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25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO

July 19, 1985

South African cops murdered at least seven Blacks in KwaThema township July 9. Anglican Bishop Simeon Nikoane and other residents said the massacre began when cops fired tear gas into a theater where Blacks were holding a silent vigil for four of the eight Blacks killed in KwaThema June 26. As Blacks fled the theater, the cops opened fire.

Despite the police terror, hundreds attended the funeral of the four that day. "Funerals represent one of the few ways for South Africa's Black majority of 23 million to hold legal meetings," reported the July 10 *New York Times*.

Massacres and assassinations by the racist apartheid regime have taken the lives of more than 500 Black freedom fighters in the past year.

There is growing evidence that the government is organizing covert death squads to "disappear" and murder opponents of apartheid.

July 11, 1960

The Socialist Workers party today published the text of the platform upon which its national candidates—Farrell Dobbs for president and Myra Tanner Weiss for vice president—will run in the 1960 elections.

Three key issues dominate the 1960 campaign, its opening paragraph states: "(1) How can the world be free from the threat of nuclear destruction? (2) How can hunger and poverty be wiped out? (3) How can democracy and equality be won and maintained?"

"Forty-three years after entering the first global conflict to 'Make the World Safe for Democracy,' America has yet to make its lunch counters safe for Negroes in the South." The platform contains over a score of proposals to restore and expand civil liberties, defend labor's rights, and protect the positions of minority groups.

July 20, 1935

Tribesmen of all Ethiopia are prepared to drop the ploughshare and seize the sword to drive back the Fascist marauder and preserve the independence of their nation.

To a man, they responded to the battle cry of Haile Selassie, who exhorted them with the appeal: "Better die free than live as slaves."

Close to 200,000 Italian troops are now in eastern Africa prepared to assume military operations against the legions of Haile Selassie. Three hundred planes are being dispatched by Mussolini to overcome hazards of desert fighting. Corroding acid to burn the soles of the feet of the Ethiopian soldiers is being turned out in large quantities and shipped to Eritrea and Italian Somaliland.

Reports emanating from Italian territory in east Africa declare that demoralization is setting in among the troops stationed there.

Trial of cop goes to jury

Continued from front page
ond-degree murder charge.

The BART cops were called to the Oakland train platform after being notified about a fight on a crowded New Year's Eve train. They ordered Grant and some of his friends out of the train. Officer Anthony Pirone grabbed Grant and threw him up against a wall. Grant's friend Jackie Bryson was handcuffed. Mehserle arrived on the platform a couple of minutes before he shot Grant.

Deputy Alameda County prosecutor David Stein said in summing up the case against Mehserle that the defendant's desire to punish "resulted in the death of an innocent person. He must be held liable."

Stein said that Pirone was "out of control, he was unhinged," uttering the racist slurs, "Bitch-ass nigger, right? Bitch-ass nigger, right?" at Grant moments before Mehserle shot him. Stein said the two cops were "acting in tandem as police officers do."

Defense attorney Michael Rains argued throughout the trial that Mehserle had intended to Taser Grant and mistakenly drew his gun instead. Rains claims that Mehserle received inadequate training from the BART police department, resulting in his "confusion."

Stein also pointed out that Pirone testified that a couple of minutes after the shooting, Mehserle told him, "Hey Tony, I thought he was going for a gun." Another BART cop, Terry Foreman, also testified that Mehserle told him that same morning that he thought Grant was "going for a gun," and that Mehserle said nothing about a Taser.

During his testimony, Mehserle cried repeatedly on the witness stand. Rains tried to portray Mehserle as a non-aggressive cop, different than Pirone. He said Mehserle was featured in his high school yearbook as "most huggable."

In his summation Rains told the jury that a court of law is not the place to "redress social or racial injustice." He claimed the use of a Taser on Grant was justified because he was "resisting arrest."

Throughout the trial Rains tried to demonize Grant and his friends. Rains recalled the testimony of a cop in San Leandro, California, about a 2006 incident where the police used a Taser on Grant following a traffic stop. Rains also tried to portray Grant as central to the fight on the BART train prior to the shooting.

Grant's uncle, Cephus Johnson, spoke to the media at lunchtime breaks throughout the trial. He told the press that court rules prohibited the prosecution from being able to introduce into evidence previous attacks by Mehserle, including the beating of an African American male. "The system is to blame, the system denied us the right to produce evidence," he said.

After the closing arguments were completed the next day, Johnson told the media, "The videos speak for us . . . to what we have been saying for the past 18 months. A murder took place on that platform."

Militant/Naomi Craine

Oscar Grant's uncle, Cephus Johnson, speaks July 1 outside Los Angles trial of cop who killed Grant. Videos of shooting were widely viewed on the Internet.

The Grant family members have filed a civil lawsuit against BART. Grant's five-year-old daughter was awarded a $1.5 million settlement earlier this year. A claim filed by Grant's mother, Wanda Johnson, is pending.

Chicago cop lied about police torture of suspects

BY JOHN HAWKINS

CHICAGO—Seventeen years after being fired from the Chicago police department for suffocating, shocking, and beating confessions out of suspects, Jon Burge was convicted here June 28 on federal perjury and obstruction of justice charges for lying about the torture in a civil lawsuit.

Burge, a police lieutenant on Chicago's South Side, ran the notorious "Midnight Crew"—a gang of detectives that for decades extracted confessions from suspects through torture. More than 100 people, most of them Black males, have stepped forward with accounts of the abuse.

Four of the 100 testified at Burge's trial. Previous testimony from a fifth brutalized suspect, Andrew Wilson, was read into the record. Wilson died in prison in 2007.

The witnesses detailed beatings with pistols and flashlights; suffocations; electric shocks to genitals, ears, and other body parts; Russian roulette "games"; and other methods that forced them to confess to crimes they did not commit.

Their testimony was bolstered by doctors and nurses who witnessed their injuries and by the testimony of former Chicago police detective Michael McDermott, who testified against his former boss in exchange for immunity.

"Finally, the poor people won," Mark Clements told the press after the verdict. Clements, a victim of cop torture, was released from prison last year after being incarcerated for nearly 30 years. "Hopefully Jon Burge will receive an appropriate sentence and he will have time to think about the consequences of his actions," Clements said.

The refusal of those tortured to accept their treatment in silence, their pursuit of legal action, and mounting outrage especially in Chicago's Black neighborhoods led to the exposure of the cops' practices and to Burge's conviction.

In 1993 the Chicago police department finally fired Burge. But it would take nearly two decades more to get Burge convicted of a crime.

In January 2003 then Illinois governor George Ryan pardoned several men on death row who had been tortured under Burge's reign into confessing to murders they did not commit.

In 2006 a special Cook County prosecutor's investigation concluded that the actions of Burge and others were indeed torture but that the statute of limitations had run out for prosecution of their crimes.

In 2008 Burge was arrested and charged with lying about the torture in a lawsuit filed by former death row inmate Madison Hobley. Burge's trial got under way this year, ending with his conviction. He remains free on bond awaiting sentencing and still draws a pension.

Ronald Kitchen, tortured under Burge and jailed for 21 years for murders he did not commit, has filed a civil suit against him and other officials, including Chicago mayor Richard Daley, who was Cook County state's attorney at the time of Kitchen's conviction.

Ronald Kitchen, brutalized by cops under Burge's direction, served 21 years in jail for crime he did not commit. He has now filed suit against Burge and Mayor Richard Daley.

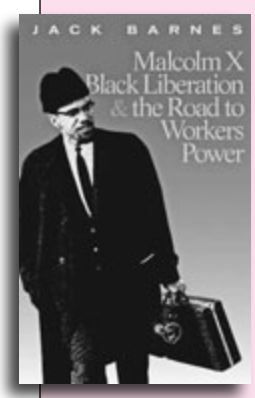
A doctor who examined Wilson after he was tortured by Burge's men wrote a letter to then police superintendent Richard Brzeczek noting Wilson's condition and proposing an investigation into possible police brutality. Brzeczek forwarded the letter to Daley. No investigation ever took place.

Speaking to reporters immediately following Burge's conviction, federal prosecutor Patrick Fitzgerald announced that the ex-cop could get 45 years in jail.

Three African American members of Congress from the Chicago area—Danny Davis, Jesse Jackson Jr., and Bobby Rush—along with U.S. senator Roland Burris announced plans to introduce bills in the Senate and House of Representatives that would lift the statute of limitations on charges of torture by police.

"The conviction of Jon Burge, even on the lesser charges he faced, is a victory for all working people," said Alyson Kennedy, Socialist Workers Party candidate for U.S. Senate in Illinois. "It sends a message to would-be cop torturers that their actions will not go undiscovered and unchallenged. All working people should join those who courageously spoke out against this brutality in demanding the prosecution and conviction of all the cops involved."

Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power
by Jack Barnes



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U.S. gov't, EU impose new sanctions on Iran

Boeing 747 belonging to Iran's national airline, Iran Air. These and two-thirds of other Iranian aircraft are now banned from European airspace as imperialists ratchet up sanctions and other pressures on Iran in effort to force it to abandon nuclear program.

BY CINDY JAQUITH

Both the U.S. government and the European Union (EU) have followed up on recently enacted UN sanctions to further tighten penalties and expand imperialist pressure against Iran because of its nuclear program.

On June 9 the UN Security Council adopted sanctions against Iran for the fourth time since 2006. The latest round calls for inspections of ship cargoes heading to or from Iran, measures against Iranian banks abroad with connections to nuclear or missile programs, and blacklisting of more Iranian companies.

The sanctions came as Tehran continued to enrich uranium, a process needed to produce nuclear fuel that at higher levels can be used to make an atomic bomb. Washington contends Tehran plans to produce nuclear weapons. The Iranian government denies this.

The Security Council resolution bans sales of some weapons to Iran and urges governments to exercise vigilance when doing business with the Iran Central Bank or companies controlled by the Pasdaran, the Iranian military force that is dominant in the government.

On July 1 U.S. president Barack Obama signed into law further sanctions against Iran. "Obama said the new sanctions were the toughest ever passed by the U.S. Congress," Reuters reported.

The new U.S. measures are mainly aimed at non-U.S. companies and banks. Firms that sell Iran more than $1 million in refined petroleum a year or do business with Iranian banks associated with the Pasdaran or Iran's nuclear programs, could be denied access to the U.S. banking system.

The French energy giant Total announced it was stopping gasoline sales to Iran, and Spain's Repsol said it was withdrawing from a contract to help develop the South Pars gas field in southern Iran. BP, anxious to repair relations with Washington in the wake of the Gulf oil spill disaster, stopped refueling Iranian passenger planes.

The Chinese government opposed Washington's new sanctions. "China supports the UN sanctions," said Foreign Ministry spokesman Qin Gang, adding that other countries should focus on implementing the UN penalties, not expanding on them unilaterally. China's trade with Iran reached $36.5 billion last year. Tehran supplies 11 percent of China's energy.

The EU adopted further sanctions against Iran June 17, banning companies from investing in or aiding Iranian oil and gas firms. The EU currently bans its members from dealing with one Iranian bank, Bank Melli, but that is now under review. Washington has sanctions against transactions with 16 Iranian banks.

On July 6 the European Commission announced that two-thirds of Iran Air flights are banned from the airspace of the 27 EU countries. Iran Air is a government-owned company.

The commission claimed its decision was based only on safety, and should not be interpreted as another sanction against Iran's nuclear program.

The ban affects Iran Air Airbus A-320 and Boeing B-727 and B-747 planes. The 30-year U.S. ban on most trade with Iran has made it particularly difficult for Iran to purchase spare parts to maintain its Boeing planes.

According to the Iranian news service Press TV, Iran now has only 23 aircraft allowed in EU airspace.

Prosecutors seek longer jail time for attorney

BY SETH GALINSKY

A hearing that could result in more jail time for imprisoned attorney Lynne Stewart has been set for July 15. Stewart began serving a 28-month sentence November 19 on frame-up charges of "conspiracy to provide material aid to terrorist activity."

Stewart, 70, is a well-known criminal defense attorney who often took unpopular cases and defended political activists and working people who could not afford a lawyer.

In a move to intimidate other attorneys considering defense of those charged with "terrorism," U.S. prosecutors argue that the court should apply a "terrorism enhancement" to Stewart, which would subject her to up to a 30-year jail term.

The charges against Stewart stem from her work as one of the lawyers for Sheik Omar Abdel-Rahman, a blind Muslim cleric who was found guilty on frame-up charges of "seditious conspiracy" for allegedly plotting to blow up the United Nations headquarters, the Lincoln and Holland tunnels leading into New York City, and other buildings. No physical evidence linking Abdel-Rahman to any crime was presented during the trial.

Not content with sentencing Abdel-Rahman to life in prison, U.S. officials also imposed extreme restrictions, banning him from sending or receiving any messages and limiting communication with friends and family. Lawyers representing him were required to agree to abide by these Special Administrative Measures.

In 2002 federal prosecutors accused Stewart of releasing a press statement on behalf of Abdel-Rahman to Reuters in 2000 in violation of these restrictions, two years after the alleged "crime."

U.S. agents "had used wiretaps carried on for over 13 years. They were listening in on telephone conversations, fax and email," Stewart noted after she was charged. "Worse, they violated the attorney-client privilege by listening to conversations between my client and myself at the jail."

When Stewart appealed her 2005 conviction, the federal appeals court rejected it and ruled that the 28-month sentence imposed by Judge John Koeltl was too light and ordered that the judge resentence her in a way that reflects the "seriousness" of the charges. The appeals tribunal also instructed Koeltl to consider whether or not Stewart committed perjury during the trial.

Prosecutors claim Stewart committed perjury when she argued that lawyers frequently violate the undemocratic Special Administrative Measures because this is necessary to adequately defend their clients.

Letters in support of Stewart for the resentencing hearing can be sent to the judge, but they must be submitted by Stewart's lawyers. Address letters to: Honorable John G. Koeltl, United States District Judge, Southern District of New York, 500 Pearl Street, New York, NY 10007, but mail them to the Lynne Stewart Defense Committee, 350 Broadway, Suite 700, New York, NY 10013.

Dairy farmers hold protests to demand price guarantees

BY RACHELE FRUIT

Dairy farmers in a number of states carried out protests on July 4 to highlight the dire situation many face.

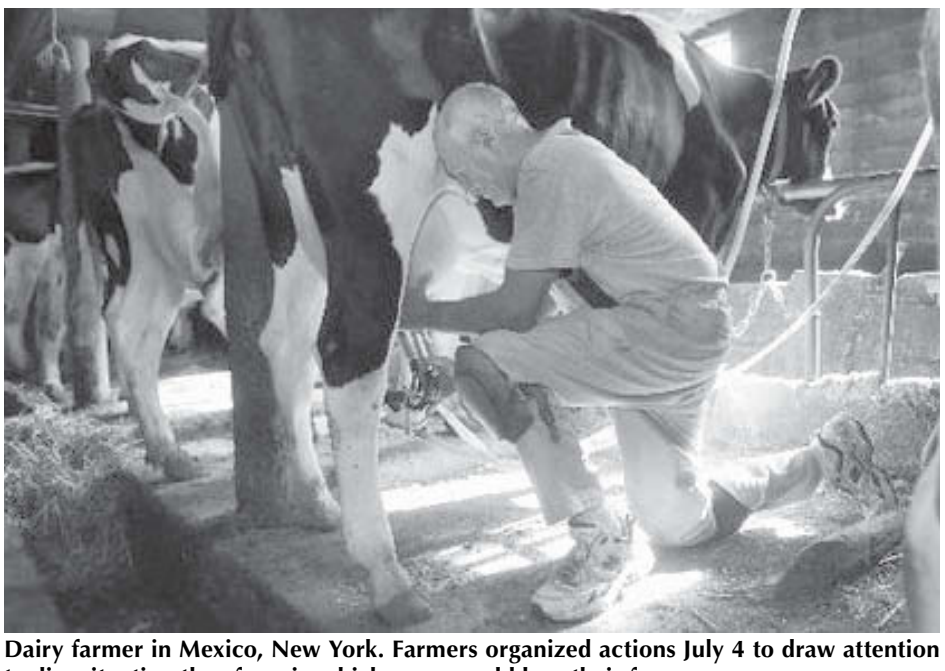
Robin and David Fitch, among the initiators of the actions, milk 150 cows on 400 acres in New York State. They told AOLNews that they've lost more than $100,000 in the past year and unless Congress sets a milk price floor of $18 per hundredweight (about $1.55 a gallon) they'll lose the farm that's been in their family for five generations.

According to Robin Fitch, New York dairy farmers are getting a little more than $16 per hundredweight. She said there were protest activities in at least 15 to 20 states.

Woody Wittenberg of Cement City, Michigan, dumped out 1,300 gallons of raw milk as part of the protest. He lost a significant part of his income in 2009, and when the prices dropped, he had an additional $471,000 debt he could not pay.

Wittenberg said that in Michigan, dairy farmers are getting $13.38 per hundredweight. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the total cost of production in May for Michigan was $21.84 per hundredweight.

Rachele Fruit is the SWP candidate for Georgia Agriculture Commissioner.


Dairy farmer in Mexico, New York. Farmers organized actions July 4 to draw attention to dire situation they face, in which many could lose their farms.

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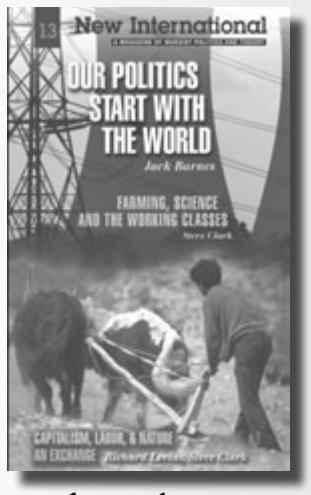

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1920: Toilers of East call for unity against exploiters

Below is an excerpt from To See the Dawn, *one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for July. It contains the proceedings of the First Congress of the Peoples of the East, convened by the Communist International Sept. 1–7, 1920, in Baku, Azerbaijan. The meeting, with some 2,000 delegates from more than two dozen peoples of Asia, registered a new stage in the emancipation struggle of colonial and oppressed peoples and in the world struggle for socialism. This stage had been opened by the October 1917 revolution in Russia that established a revolutionary workers and peasants republic. The victory inspired toilers worldwide in the fight against imperialist domination and capitalist exploitation. Among the documents issued by the congress was "Appeal to the Workers of Europe, America, and Japan," excerpts of which are printed below. Copyright © 1993 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted with permission.*

City Library, La Chaux-de-Fonds, Switzerland

Delegates to Congress of the Peoples of the East in Baku, Azerbaijan, September 1920. Seated fourth from right with raised arm is revolutionary journalist John Reed from United States.

For many years, for many decades we have been silent. You did not hear our voice. No one told you of us, of how we live, how we suffer under the rule of those who are your masters too.

Your masters, the European and American factory owners, merchants, generals, and officials, broke into the peace of our villages and towns, plundered us for centuries, took from us what our work in the past had created, and sent all this off to Europe to embellish their lives, their homes, with the labor of our hands and of our ancient culture. They turned us into slaves.

Where previously we had to pay tribute to our own rich men, to the landlords, slave owners, sultans, emirs, khans, and maharajas, now the whip of the European slave owners was also laid across our backs. We were forced to labor on the plantations of the European capitalists. Sweat poured from our brow so that they might obtain rice, tea, sugar, tobacco, and rubber at a cheap rate. Our children were born and died in bondage. If it suited the interests of your bosses and ours, they parted child from mother, wife from husband, and drove them from one country to another.

To you they said that they were bringing European knowledge and science to our countries. But what they brought in fact was opium and vodka, so that when sorrow welled up in the heart of the Asian and African slaves, they would more easily forget their intolerable life and would not dare to lift their chained hands against their enslaver.

Your bosses, the European capitalists, supported our own enslavers, making them their guard dogs to watch over us. But when the whip of the local ruler was not enough, they sent in white soldiers, they sent in cannon. They destroyed the independence of our countries, subjecting us to their laws and their governors and making slaves of us in the full sense of the word. The aim of their colonial rule, they told us, was to train us for future independence. But they fought with every means against the spread of knowledge among us toilers of the East. Prisons and barracks for us they had in number, but they did not build schools where the children of Asia might learn what the white men had discovered that was great and good. They looked on us as an inferior race; they forbade us to sit in the same railway carriage that white men traveled in; they forbade us to live in the same neighborhood as white people or to eat at the same table with them. . . .

Only a common victory of the workers of Europe and America and the toiling masses of Asia and Africa will bring liberation to all who have until now toiled for the happiness of the wealthy few. If you were to free yourselves alone, leaving us in slavery and bondage, you yourselves would fall the next day into the same bondage. For in order to keep us in chains and in prison, you would have to form packs of prison bloodhounds to guard us in the East and in the South. You would have to raise armies to keep us under an iron heel. You would have to give power over us to your generals and governors. And once they had tasted the sweetness of the idle life lived at the expense of our labor and learned how to hold generations of colored toilers in bondage, they would soon turn their bayonets against you—and the wealth accumulated in Asia and Africa would be used to thrust you back into your previous slavery.

If you were to forget us now, you would pay dearly for that mistake; you would have cause to remember our chains when you felt chains on your own hands. You cannot free yourselves unless you help us in our struggle for liberation. The wealth of our countries is, in the hands of the capitalists, a means of enslaving you. So long as the British capitalist can freely exploit Indian, Egyptian, and Turkish peasants, so long as he can rob them, so long as he can force them to serve in the British army, he will always have wealth enough and executioners enough to subdue the British workers. Without our revolt there can be no victory for the British workers over the British capitalists, for the world proletariat over world capital.

And just as you cannot wrest power from the hands of the capitalists without unity with us, so you are not in a position to maintain power without this unity. The capitalist countries of Europe do not produce enough grain and raw materials to provide food, clothing, and footwear for their workers. Our countries, the countries of the East and of Africa, are rich in grain and raw materials. Without these supplies, the workers of Europe would die of starvation after their victory. They will be able to obtain these supplies by uniting with the toilers of Africa and Asia, by helping the toiling masses of Africa and Asia and thus inspiring them with confidence and love.

Such unity between ourselves and you will bring invincible strength. We will be able to feed and clothe each other; we will be able to help each other with armies of warriors fired with the single idea of common liberation.

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

Workers of Britain, America, France, Italy, Japan, Germany, and other countries! Hear the representatives of millions of toilers of the East. Listen to the voice of sorrow, speaking to you from the enslaved countries of Asia and Africa, from Turkey, Persia, China, Egypt, Afghanistan, Bukhara, and Khiva.

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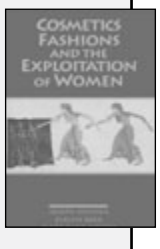
Cosmetics, Fashions, and the Exploitation of Women



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EDITORIAL

Medieval divorce law to go at last

Is there a state in the union where two people in a marriage can't obtain a divorce for the asking by either party? Up until recently the answer has been, "Yes, New York."

Every worker can applaud the recent decision of the New York State legislature to make it possible for a couple in New York to dissolve their marriage without having to assign blame, and for a spouse to unilaterally end the marriage. No longer will one spouse be required to accuse the other of adultery, cruelty, or abandonment before the state will dissolve the marriage. No longer will individuals be pressed to offer humiliating false testimony to help a coworker or friend obtain a divorce from the court.

The bill was adopted at the same time the legislature passed another measure, granting rights to domestic workers.

For well-heeled divorce lawyers the "fault" system was a money-making machine. Workers were often forced not only to commit perjury, but each side had to pay expensive legal fees. Under the current law, even victims of domestic violence who are seeking to end their marriages must enter into a costly court proceeding where they must also confront their abusive spouse.

Opponents of a change in the law, notably the Catholic Church, divorce lawyers, and National Organization for Women New York State, claim to be defending women's rights in arguing for the governor not to sign the new bill. But contrary to the teachings of the church, marriages aren't "made in heaven," and if either spouse wants to end the union, for whatever reason, no worker should be tied up in a degrading legal battle with the state to do so.

One of New York's legendary divorce lawyers bemoaned the passing of the new law saying, "Now you can get out of a marriage quicker than you can get out of a magazine subscription." Unfortunately, that will not be the case, because the state will continue to find ways to reinforce the marriage institution that is so useful to the capitalist system, but at least a worker in New York won't have to deal with a medieval law to obtain a divorce.

New York domestic workers win rights

Continued from front page

cois, 51, told the *New York Times*. She said she left her job as a nanny a year and a half ago because her employer beat her. This law "will mean that we will have protection, that the work we do will be recognized," she added.

According to Domestic Workers United, there are about 200,000 domestic workers in New York City and as many as 60,000 to 70,000 statewide. Most are women and immigrants. The group said it found about one-third reported verbal or physical abuse by employers, and two-thirds said they never received overtime pay, reported Associated Press.

This bill is an attempt to "reverse 75 years of discrimination," Priscilla Gonzalez, the group's director, told the media. "Workers will have basic rights and protections that have been denied to them for so long.

The legislation passed in the Assembly 89–38 and the Senate 35–26 after the bill's sponsors agreed to drop provisions allowing domestic workers to sue employers who violated the law and requiring employers to give two weeks notice before firing workers. Gov. David Paterson said he would sign the legislation. Similar bills are being discussed by legislators in California and Colorado. One of the bill's provisions would require the Department of Labor "to conduct a study by year's end of the capacity for domestic workers to organize," reported the *Wall Street Journal*, saying this "could mean a nannies' union isn't far off."

The no-fault divorce bill, which the State Assembly overwhelmingly approved July 1 in a 113-19 vote and the State Senate passed two weeks earlier, would for the first time allow a couple in New York to dissolve their marriage by mutual consent without requiring one spouse to accuse the other of adultery, abandonment, or cruel and inhuman treatment.

A spouse will be able to unilaterally end a marriage by swearing under oath that the relationship has been broken for at least six months and cannot be repaired.

New York was the only one of the 50 states that still required proof of fault to obtain a divorce. Under the old law divorces could go through once one of the partners took the blame, or if a spouse were locked up for more than three years, or if both sides consented, they could get a divorce one year after signing a written separation agreement.

The new law will make it much easier for spouses who have been subjected to domestic violence to obtain divorces. Under the fault system they could spend years trying to get one.

The New York State Catholic Conference condemned the new bill, releasing a statement that asserted, "Increasingly society has come to view marriage as disposable and temporary."

LETTERS

University of Puerto Rico

Thanks so much for covering the story of what is going on with the University of Puerto Rico (July 12 *Militant*).

We really appreciate the support we have received from the *Militant* since the beginning of our strike.

Always forward in the struggle!

Frederick J. Cortés Díaz
San Juan, Puerto Rico

'I spread your words'

Thanks so much for this information and all your hard work.

I read my paper and then give it to others. I spread your words that way.

I also purchased the book *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power.*

S.R.
Seattle, Washington

A suggestion

I wish your paper had a cultural page.

D.R.
Raleigh, North Carolina

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

Puerto Rico: Independence Is a Necessity

By Rafael Cancel Miranda

"Our people are becoming aware of their own strength, which is what the colonial powers fear," explains Puerto Rican independence leader Rafael Cancel Miranda. In two interviews, Cancel Miranda—one of five Puerto Rican Nationalists imprisoned by Washington for more than 25 years until 1979—speaks out on the brutal reality of U.S. colonial domination, the campaign to free Puerto Rican political prisoners, and the example of Cuba's socialist revolution. **$6**

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Unemployment

Continued from front page

adults 62 years and older have postponed retirement.

Nonfarm payrolls fell by 125,000 in June, the first month of losses this year, in large part due to the government ending employment for 225,000 census workers. The 83,000 private sector jobs the government says were created falls far short of what is needed to keep up with new workers joining the ranks of labor, never mind the millions of unemployed. Manufacturing added only 9,000 jobs nationwide, compared to an average 25,000 in the previous five months.

Statistics cover up true joblessness

A July 2 Labor Department report announced that official unemployment fell to 9.5 percent in June, down from 9.7 percent in May. The lower unemployment rate is not due to jobs being created by a rebounding economy. To the contrary the federal government was able to report lower overall unemployment for the month by eliminating from their statistics 652,000 workers who were too discouraged to keep looking for work. An additional 2 million workers are already in this category. Another 8.6 million workers are employed only part-time because of a lack of full-time work. When all are factored in, the rate for workers seeking full-time jobs is 16.5 percent.

The newly released unemployment figures also show an increasing number of long-term unemployed workers. There are currently 6.8 million workers who have been unemployed for 27 weeks or more and they are now 45.5 percent of all those without jobs. At 4.4 percent of the total civilian workforce, this is the highest level recorded since the government began keeping statistics.

The average length of time the typical unemployed person has been looking for work is 35.2 weeks, a record high.

Blacks and Latinos are disproportionately affected with official unemployment rates of 15.4 percent and 12.4 percent respectively. More than 25 percent of all teenagers are without a job.

Other recent signs in the economy point to a further decline in employment opportunities and mounting pressures on workers. In May orders for manufactured goods were the lowest in over a year. House and apartment sales dropped precipitously, and retail sales fell for the first time since the fall.

Local government cuts and layoffs

Local governments across the country eliminated more than 20,000 jobs in the past month.

Los Angeles officials began layoffs July 1 of 360 city workers. In New York City, the newly passed city budget made $1 billion in cuts, including eliminating 5,300 jobs. The budget also closes 30 senior centers, shuts down a 24-hour homeless drop-in center, and eliminates nurses from 145 schools with less than 300 students.

By the end of the first week of July, 1.7 million unemployed workers will no longer receive benefits because they have been without a job for too long. Without a federal extension of unemployment benefits, this figure will top 3 million by the end of this month. Unemployment payments average about $300 per week.

Ignoring signs that the U.S. economy could be heading into another downturn, President Barack Obama called the new unemployment statistics a "stark turnaround" and said, "Make no mistake, we are headed in the right direction."

"We are now, I fear, in the early stages of a third depression," wrote *New York Times* columnist Paul Krugman June 27.

"Unemployment—especially long-term unemployment—remains at levels that would have been considered catastrophic not long ago," he wrote, "and shows no sign of coming down rapidly."

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